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descriptions. In Old Norse saga and lands we not infrequently meet with coarse speeches and quarrels, with raw ruffianism, during which the heroes in the king's palace break each other's heads with clubs, and the like, while in Beowulf the quarrel between Beowulf and Unferth preserves, on the whole, if not a mildness, at least an Old Germanic decency."

It was in reply to this part of Sarrazin's argument that Ten Brink made a few remarks on the difference in civilization between the Scandinavian and English tribes. "Scandinavian origin," he answered,

"is impossible because those qualities, namely, the quiet tone of narration, the pleasure and clearness by which the background to the action is brought to view, because, in a word, the grand, epic style have not been found in Old Scandinavian poetry itself. This epic style is only possible in union with development of culture, which manifested itself in that age in a high degree of gentleness and in a refinement of customs, in short, in a social condition, which in the seventh and eighth centuries the English had developed to a much higher degree than any other Germanic people and especially the Scandinavians. The entire intercourse between the Danish king and Beowulf, with its marked expression of humanity; has not its equal throughout all older Germanic poetry or even among the Romanic peoples."

CHARLES FLINT MCCLUMPHA.

*The University of the City of New York.*

### THE MORRIS-SKEAT CHAUCER, NOTES AND QUERIES.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—It is with much diffidence that I venture to call attention to some statements in the latest edition of this valuable text, which seem erroneous or inconsistent. It is not a becoming thing for a mere novice to pit himself against scholars like Dr. Morris and Dr. Skeat; and I, therefore, throw my criticisms into the form of queries and suggested emendations, in the hope of receiving from some source at present inaccessible, information on passages, not satisfactorily explained by the notes.

"And frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly  
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe  
For Frensh of Paris was to her unknowe,"

Prol. 124-125

In his note on this passage, Mr. Skeat<sup>1</sup> combats the opinion of Wright and Tyrwhitt, who think

<sup>1</sup>Prof. Lounsbury condemns Skeat's view unsparingly. 'Studies in Chaucer,' ii, 457 f.

that Chaucer is ridiculing the Prioresses bad French. He contends that

"There is nothing to show that Chaucer intended a sneer; he merely states a *fact*, namely, that the Prioress spoke the usual Anglo-French of the English court, of the English law-courts, and of the English ecclesiastics of the higher rank."

At the end of the same note (p. 137), he also says

"The 'French of Norfolk, as spoken of in P. Plowman (B. v. 239), was no French at all but English; and the alleged parallel is misleading, as the reader who cares to refer to that passage will easily see."

The passage referred to runs as follows:

"Repentedestow the euere," quod Repentence ne restitution  
madest?

'Zus, ones I was herberwed,' quod he, with an hep of chapmen,

I roos whan thei were arest, and yrifled here males.

'That was no restitution,' quod Repentance but a robbers thefte,

Thow haddest be better worthy, be hanged therefore

Than for al that, that thou hast here shewed.'

I wende ryflynge were restitution,' quod he 'for I lerned  
neuere rede on boke,

And I can no Frenche in feith. but of the ferthest ende of  
Horfolke."

P. Plowman, B. v. 231-239

Surely the point of Avarice's excuse lies in his mistaking the unknown word for a French word, as indeed it is by derivation. If the French of Norfolk is English, what is the reason for introducing the expression? But Mr. Skeat's note on this passage seems to be inconsistent with his note to the Prologue; the former runs as follows:

"He pretends that he thought *restitution* was the French for robbery.—Norfolk is evidently considered as one of the least refined parts of the island, being in an out-of-the-way corner; and we are to infer that French was almost unknown there. The common proverb—Jack would be a gentleman, if he could speak French—shows that the common people had much trouble in learning it."

P. Plowman, ii, 85.

Possibly, Mr. Skeat may have reconciled these two statements somewhere, and I have not heard of it. Perhaps, Wright and Tyrwhitt are not so very far astray after all.

"His banner he desplayeth,"

Knights Tale, 108.

Mr. Skeat explains this, "he summons his troops to assemble for military service." P. 192.

How can Theseus summon his troops to assemble, when he is leading his host back from a victorious campaign (ll. 15, 16)? Was not the military ceremony of unfurling the royal ensign a declaration of war? In Pandemonium, Satan's standard is unfurled before an already assembled host (l. 522 f.) with the fanfare of fiendish trumpets. The incident inspires one of the most gorgeous purple patches in all Milton.

"Then straight commands that at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd  
His mighty standard; that proud honour claim'd  
Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
Th'imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd  
Shon like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds."

Paradise Lost, i, ll. 531-540.

"The rede statue of Mars with spere and targe  
So shyneth in his whyte banner large,  
That all the feeldes gliteren up and down."

K. F., ll. 117-119.

Mr. Skeat considers "feeldes" to be the "heraldic term for the ground upon which the various charges, as they are called, are emblazoned." P. 172. I venture to think this mistaken. Chaucer has a strong sense of color, and in this case, he wishes to impress us with the magnificence of Duke Theseus' broad banner, which, with its brilliant crimson and white, lights up the whole landscape, the peaceful fields alongside the highway. To say that the red figure of Mars merely brightens the rest of the flag seems to me tame and unimaginative.

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

Dalhousie College, Halifax, N. S.

### THE PHONETIC SECTION.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—All persons interested either in general phonetics or in the special subject of American pronunciation, are invited to help on the work of the Section by sending a dollar to the Secretary. Anyone can become a member on payment of this sum.

To the gentlemen who still have copies of the fourth circular, the Secretary would suggest that they send in their answers as soon as possible. The results have not yet been tabulated.

C. H. GRANDGENT, Sec'y.  
Cambridge, Mass.

### BRIEF MENTION.

The latest addition to the "Romans choisis" of W. R. Jenkins (Boston: Schœnhof) is Henri de Bornier's 'la Lizardière.' The author is already known to the American public by his play 'la Fille de Roland,' some time since selected as one of the publications in Jenkins' 'Théâtre contemporain.' His novel is one of contemporary life and manners in the higher sense, and cannot fail to win many readers.

Ginn & Co. have published in their "International Modern Language Series" the charming little French comedy, 'la Cigale chez les Fourmis.' Prof. Van Daell has given it and its authors, Legouvé and Labiche, a short preface, and has added the few notes required for class work.

### PERSONAL.

Adolph Rambeau, Ph.D., has been appointed Associate in Romance Languages in the Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Rambeau's Gymnasium training was received at Wittenberg (Germany); he took the doctor's degree (1877) in Romance Languages at the University of Marburg, when he presented a thesis entitled, "Ueber die als Echt nachweisbaren Assonanzen des Oxforder Textes der Chanson de Roland." For several years past he has been Professor in the Wilhelm Gymnasium of Hamburg, during which time he was a frequent contributor to the columns of the *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Litteratur*, the *Phonetische Studien*, etc.

Dr. Hermann Schönfeld, of the Johns Hopkins University, has in preparation a German and a French Historical Reader. The material for these works will be arranged chronologically, and covers the historical development of the German and French peoples from the earliest times down to the present; the characteristic periods of history being drawn from the best German and French historians.

Alexander W. Herdler has been appointed Instructor for French and German in the Scientific Department of Princeton College. Mr. Herdler is a graduate (1884) of the State Normal College of Prague, where he afterward attended lectures at the university for two years. Since 1889 he had been teaching in various schools of New York state, whence he passed to his present position; he has published in the *Teacher* the following articles: "How to teach Modern Languages;" "What is Philosophical Pedagogy;" "The Psychology of Lotze and Herbart."

### OBITUARY.

EDUARD MAETZNER.

The death of this distinguished scholar and teacher on July 13th (1892) marked the end of